



# AREOPAGUS PROCLAMATION

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# Is God Personal? Is God Knowable?

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## WHO BELIEVES THAT GOD IS IMPERSONAL?

Ludwig van **Beethoven**, Henry David **Thoreau**, Ansel **Adams**, Pete **Seeger**, and Walt **Whitman** were all **pantheists** who denied the reality of a personal God.

The brilliant scientist, **Albert Einstein**, once declared, "I do not believe in a personal God and I have never denied this but have expressed it clearly."

**HINDUISM** refers to *Nirguna Brahman* as the impersonal aspect of the Ultimate Reality — beyond conception, beyond reasoning, and beyond thought.

**SPIRITUALISM** says: "Infinite intelligence . . . is without shape or form, and is impersonal, omnipresent, and omnipotent."

**BAHA'I** teaches that God is "unknowable in His essence."

**JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES** say that the Holy Spirit is God's "Active Force," but not a person.

**EASTERN** and **NEW AGE** worldviews claim that "God" is the name people use for what is really just an impersonal life force or formless cosmic order.

## WHO BELIEVES THAT GOD IS PERSONAL AND KNOWABLE?

**WIN CORDUAN:**  
"As we look at the portraits of deities

in different religions we see God doing good, helping people, even loving them from time to time, but often with a love that is more the love of *desire* than it is the love of renunciation. It is in the view of God as provided for us in the New Testament of the Bible that we find the highest indication of personhood, for here we find the God who was willing to sacrifice His own Son on the cross for the sake of redeeming the human race."

**FRANCIS A. SCHAEFFER:** "No one has ever demonstrated how time plus chance, beginning with the impersonal, can produce the needed complexity of the universe, let alone the personality of man. No one has given us a clue to this."

**FRANCIS A. SCHAEFFER:** ". . . on the side of personality, man can know God truly, though he cannot know God exhaustively."

**C.S. LEWIS:** "A good many people nowadays say, 'I believe in a God, but not in a personal God.' They feel that the mysterious something which is behind all other things must be more than a person. Now the Christians quite agree. But the Christians are the only people who offer any idea of what a being that is beyond personality could be like. All the other people, though they say that God is beyond personality, really think of Him as something impersonal: that is, as something *less* than personal. If you are looking for something super-personal, something *more* than a person, then it is not a question of choosing between

the Christian idea and the other ideas. The Christian idea is the only one on the market."

**WILLIAM LANE CRAIG** says that "the cause of the universe cannot be merely timeless, spaceless, and immaterial, but it must also be an agent that chooses to create." He explains that abstract objects such as forms cannot in themselves hold moral value or issue commands. Both arguments establish that the explanatory ultimate for either the universe or for objective morality must be a personal God.

**D.A. CARSON:** "The wonderful truth is that God is both transcendent and personal. . . All of my most meaningful relationships with God are bound up with the fact that God has disclosed himself to be a person."

## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

**JEREMIAH  
9:23-24:**

"Thus says the LORD, '...let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD...'"

**JEREMIAH 31:34:** "... for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD."

**HOSEA 6:6:** "For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings."

**JOHN 17:3:** "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."

**1 JOHN 5:20:** "And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life."



**More Evidence in Defense and Confirmation of the Christian Faith**